

### REMARKS

The present Amendment and Remarks are in response to the Office Action entered in the above-mentioned application and mailed on August 13, 2003. Claims 1-6 are pending in the application. All have been rejected under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,309,028 to Davis et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,309,028 to Brown et al. With this Response, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to more clearly set forth some of the novel features of the invention. Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance.

Claim 1 now calls for, among other things, the step of configuring a call acceptance group such that a first subscriber terminal and at least one second subscriber terminal belong to separate communications systems. Neither Davis et al. nor Brown et al. teach or suggest this feature, either alone or in combination.

According to the Examiner, the method described by Davis et al. can be configured for use on multiple communications systems, pointing to Col. 2, lines 45-50 of the specification. However, the cited passage says nothing about configuring call acceptance groups across disparate communications systems. The cited passage only states that the illustrated embodiment shows a customer premises telephone system, specifically a private branch exchange (PBX), and that it is not necessary to practice Davis et al.'s invention on a PBX. Stating that their invention may be practiced on telephone systems other than a PBX in no way teaches or suggests that call acceptance groups may be configured across distinct communications systems.

Brown et al. are cited merely for teaching that incoming calls to a first subscriber line may be switched to a second subscriber line for call answering where the call is signaled on at least one of the first subscriber line and at least one further second subscriber line. Like Davis et al., Brown et al. teach nothing regarding configuring a call acceptance group across distinct communications systems. Brown et al. only describes practicing their invention in a single ISDN switching system environment without disclosing any interface to further switching systems.

Since neither Davis et al. nor Brown et al., alone or in combination, teach or suggest all of the features of the claimed invention, the rejection of the claims under 35 USC §103 should be withdrawn.

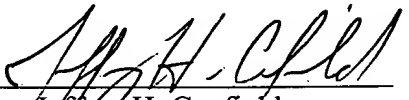
Appl. No. 09/825,084

Reply to Office Action of August 13, 2003

If any additional fees are required in connection with this response they may be charged to deposit account no. 02-1818.

Respectfully submitted,

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